

Message Text

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SUBJECT: MISSISSIPPI IOGA MISSION

REF: (A) KUWAIT 1682 (B) BAGHDAD 0417

SUMMARY: MISSISSIPPI IOGA MISSION LED BY GOV. WILLIAM WALLER SPENT THREE WORKING DAYS IN KUWAIT. INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP APPOINTMENTS WERE HELD WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, PRIVATE BUSINESSMEN AND KUWAIT UNIVERSITY OFFICIALS. INITIAL CONTACTS MADE DURING VISIT MAY LEAD TO DEFINITE BUSINESS VENTURES IF IOGA GROUP FOLLOWS UP IN THE COMING MONTHS. END SUMMARY

1. GOV WALLER LED A GROUP OF 15 BUSINESSMEN AND STATE OFFICIALS. INTERESTS AMONG GROUP VARIED BUT WERE PREDOMINATELY AGRICULTURE AND FOOD ORIENTED. MAIN AREAS OF INTEREST WERE KUWAITI INVESTMENT IN MISSISSIPPI, EXPORT-IMPORT PROMOTION AND CONTACTS BETWEEN KUWAIT UNIVERSITY AND MISSISSIPPI SCHOOLS. THE GOVERNOR, ACCOMPANIED BY EMBOFF, ALSO MET WITH MINISTERS: FINANCE, COMMUNICATIONS, WATER & ELECTRICITY, AND COMMERCE & INDUSTRY.

2. FOLLOWING EMBASSY BRIEFING GOVERNOR MET WITH PRESIDENT OF CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, TOURED SHUAIBA INDUSTRIAL AREA AND MET WITH UNDERSECRETARY MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS. THREE MEMBERS OF GROUP TOURED GOK EXPERIMENTAL FARM AND WERE SUITABLY IMPRESSED. KUWAITI INTEREST IN MISSISSIPPI AGRICULTURE UNCLASSIFIED

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SEEMS LIMITED TO FOOD PRODUCTS AND OTHER AREAS WHERE NON-

SIMILARITY OF LAND AND WEATHER CONDITIONS IS NOT A FACTOR.

3. GOVERNOR MET WITH SECRETARY-GENERAL OF KUWAIT UNIVERSITY AND DISCUSSED POSSIBILITIES OF KUWAITI STUDENTS ATTENDING MISSISSIPPI INSTITUTIONS AND PROSPECTS FOR COOPERATION IN POST GRADUATE TRAINING. OTHER OFFICIALS HELD FOLLOW-UP MEETINGS ON SAME SUBJECT WITH MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OFFICIALS. MIN. EDUCATION GRANTS MANY SCHOLARSHIPS TO KUWAITI STUDENTS.

4. GOVERNOR HELD SEVERAL MEETINGS TO DISCUSS PROSPECTS FOR KUWAITI INVESTMENT IN HIS STATE (MEETING WITH KUWAIT INVESTMENT CO. OUTLINED IN REF A).

5. DURING MEETING WITH MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, GOVERNOR DISCUSSED POTENTIAL FOR JOINT VENTURE OR TURNKEY OPERATION WITH CAL-MAINE, LARGE MISSISSIPPI POULTRY AND EGG PRODUCER. MINISTER THEN ARRANGED APPOINTMENT FOR CAL-MAINE REP WHO SHOWED SHORT FILM AND DISCUSSED TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF TURNKEY OPERATION IN KUWAIT WITH MINISTER FOR MORE THAN AN HOUR. CAL-MAINE HELD SUBSEQUENT TALKS WITH OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES AND SEEMS LIKELY PROSPECT TO PARTICIPATE IN A VENTURE HERE. GOVERNOR AGREED TO SEND A LETTER TO MINISTER OFFERING SERVICES OF CAL-MAINE OR OTHER POULTRY EXPERT TO ASSIST GOK IN POULTRY PROGRAM.

6. THROUGH IRAQI NATIONAL EMPLOYED AT GULF BANK, GOVERNOR WAS INTRODUCED TO IRAQI AMBASSADOR TO KUWAIT. MEETING WAS APPARENTLY VERY SUCCESSFUL AS GOI AMBASSADOR GAVE GOVERNOR'S ADVANCEMAN LETTERS OF INTRODUCTION, NAMES OF CONTACTS AND ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING VISAS FOR ENTIRE GROUP. (AMBASSADOR ALSO PRESENTED GOVERNOR WITH A CARPET). ADVANCEMAN PLANS VISIT BAGHDAD APRIL 16 AND ENTIRE MISSISSIPPI DELEGATION PLANS ARRIVE IN BAGHDAD EVENING OF APRIL 23. MISSISSIPPI GROUP EXTREMELY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THEIR PROSPECTS IN IRAQ AND USINT BAGHDAD HAS INDICATED THERE IS GOOD POTENTIAL FOR THIS GROUP (REF B).

7. ONE OF GOVERNOR'S LAST MEETINGS IN KUWAIT WAS WITH TOP OFFICIAL OF GULF INTERNATIONAL, OWNED BY GOK FOREIGN MINISTER AND SONS. KHALIL OSMAN, MANAGING DIRECTOR, SEEMED EXTREMELY UNCLASSIFIED

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ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR MISSISSIPPI DELEGATION TO WORK WITH GULF AND LONDON-BASED AFRICAN MINING AND AGRICULTURAL COMPANY, LONHRO, IN WHICH GULF OWNS APPROXIMATELY 22 PERCENT EQUITY. OSMAN EXPLAINED LARGE SUGAR, CATTLE AND OTHER AGRICULTURAL VENTURES PLANNED FOR SUDAN AND URGED GOV. TO STOP IN LONDON ON RETURN TO SPEAK WITH LONHRO CHAIRMAN, TINY ROLAND.

8. A DOZEN NEWSPAPER REPORTERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS ATTENDED

THE GOVERNOR'S PRESS BRIEFING AND THE DAILIES CARRIED SMALL BUT FAVORABLE ARTICLES ON THE FOLLOWING DAY.

9. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH MISSISSIPPI'S MISSION DID NOT OFFER ANY NEW PRODUCTS OR IDEAS TO KUWAITIS, GOVERNOR'S RANK AND WILLINGNESS TO MEET AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE OPENED MANY DOORS. MISSION DID NOT SEEM TOO WELL-BRIEFED ON DOING BUSINESS HERE WHICH CAUSED SOME COMPLICATIONS IN APPOINTMENTS AND SCHEDULING. ADVANCEMAN WAS NOT INFORMED OF PRESENCE OF SEVERAL COMPANIES ON MISSION OR THEIR INTENTIONS, WHICH IS WORTH REMEMBERING FOR FUTURE IOGAS, SINCE LAST MINUTE SCHEDULING AND CANCELLATIONS REMAIN ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT PROBLEMS IN HANDLING TRADE MISSIONS.
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